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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EUN](#) [EI](#) [UP](#)

SUBJECT: IRELAND'S VIEWS ON FUTURE UKRAINE EU MEMBERSHIP

Classified By: Political/Economic Chief Theodore Pierce for reasons 1.4
(B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Ireland does not oppose Ukraine entry into the EU, but does not see it happening anytime soon. End summary.

[1](#)2. (U) On February 12, in response to an inquiry from Washington, POLOFF spoke with Ruaidhri Dowling, Deputy Director of the Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia section at the Department of Foreign Affairs about Ireland's position on Ukraine joining the EU.

[1](#)3. (C) Dowling was very forthcoming in his response, saying that Ireland falls somewhere in the middle of this debate. Ireland is not against the idea like some EU countries (he did not name names) that feel that the EU has expanded as far east as it should, nor is Ireland pushing for quicker consideration for Ukraine membership like some of the newer EU member states. He added, though, that consideration for the Ukraine will be a long time in coming, mostly because the EU has added 12 new countries within a relatively short period of time and it is "fatigued." Dowling said that the EU is not really looking to expand anytime soon and that it will have to do some internal reorganization before looking to expand again. Finally, he pointed out that the line for countries that want to be considered for membership is long, with Turkey and the Balkan states currently at the head of that line.

[1](#)4. (C) According to Dowling, Ukraine would be better off if it looked to use the European Neighbourhood Policy to engage the EU, rather than push for EU membership at this stage. Ukraine has recently joined the WTO, he said, which opens up the possibility of negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. Overall, Dowling indicated that Ireland would not discount the possibility of Ukraine joining the EU, but he predicted it would not happen anytime soon.
FOLEY